



Education/Workforce Development Committee

Three-Star Program

A first-class education system provides a distinct advantage in attracting new companies and in encouraging current business to grow. Strong primary and secondary education, vocational/technical schools, and higher education institutions play a large role in a community's development, but they **must** have well-equipped and maintained facilities and innovative programs at every level to meet the challenges of the future.

High-quality education is one of the most important quality-of-life indicators for a community to address, not only for the general well-being of the citizens, but for economic development as well. Making sure students and teachers have the appropriate support will help to ensure the quality of our educational institutions and the educational service they provide.

Responsibilities of Chairperson(s):

- ✓ **Form an Education Committee** with the most diverse cross-section of the community available to make an assessment of the current local education status and future needs. The following groups **should** be represented: parents, educators/administrators/teachers/counselors at all levels, students, school board members, Employers (representing all sectors), and local government.

This list is not exhaustive; a community **should** consider inviting interested parties not included here to participate.

- ✓ **Education Institution Inventory:** Prepare an inventory of current programs that includes the following:
 - a. A list of education providers, both public and private, K-12 and post-secondary.
 - b. A list of vocational/technical schools and/or higher education institutions. If there are none in the community, determine and list the nearest ones.
 - c. A list of standards and graduation requirements, certificates, and degrees offered.
 - d. A list of cooperative training programs available to students.

- ✓ **Accreditation:**

Approved Tennessee Improvement Plan (TSIP)/Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Accreditation (SACS)

- ✓ **Highly Qualified Staff:**

All teacher workforce meet state licensure requirements and demonstrates "Highly Qualified Staff" requirements

✓ **Graduation Rate:**

Must meet or exceed the average graduation rate established by the State Board of Education (SBE).

✓ **Other Objectives: (Must complete at least two of the following)**

- a. Schools meet or exceed attendance rates established by the SBE.
- b. Schools provide opportunities for all students to experience state of the art technology and support.
- c. Career Education Program - The local schools **should** offer a career day or job shadowing program. If the school is not large enough to offer such programs, several systems can cooperatively establish and support such programs.
- d. Public/Private Partnerships- Through partnerships such as Adopt-a-School and Partners-in-Education, the community can furnish the schools a pool of volunteers to help with special projects and serve as quest speakers.

✓ **Action Plan**

Develop an action plan to help overcome any deficiencies. The plan **must** include the broad - based community participation of everyone, including school board members, students, faculty & administration, parents and other community residents. It **should** recognize the need for comprehensive education programs that prepare students to make a living and encourage the development of work experience programs.

✓ **Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Initiative**

Your community received a Voluntary Pre-K Grant from the State of Tennessee. Both the House and Senate passed the legislation for the Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act of 2005 in May of 2005. This law provides for the use of \$25 million in excess lottery dollars to establish quality pre-kindergarten classrooms through a competitive grant process. For more information about the program, visit the Governor's Pre-K Web page at <http://www.tennessee.gov/governor/prek>

✓ **Adult Literacy Program**

Approximately half of the population of Tennessee reads at a fifth grade level or below according to a report from the Department of the Treasury. With this grim statistic, counties can begin to realize the importance of adult literacy programs that offer comprehensive services to a wide variety of the population.

- a. Appropriate Location – The community **must** have a site conducive to the education and training of adults.
- b. Outreach Program – A system **must** be in place to reach adults who need the assistance.

✓ **Workforce Development**

According to recent surveys, one of the greatest concerns of employers is lack of a capable workforce. Additionally, due to the rapidly changing workplace, a community **must** provide a vigorous, responsive training system to support the high skill/high wage jobs that contribute to a health economy.

✓

- a. Current Providers - Compile a list of the training providers, both public and private, at local, regional, and state levels. In addition to worker retaining programs, include adult literacy, GED, and apprenticeship programs. This list **should** be made available to all secondary schools in the community.
- b. Action Plan - Open and maintain a dialogue with training providers, both locally and throughout the state, in order that the current and future needs of the community are clear.
- c. Increased Use of Career Centers – The Career Center System is the centerpiece of all workforce development activities throughout the state. The increase can be reflected in number of enrollees or the number of companies that are clients of the Career Centers.
- d. Link from local chamber/development district webpage to local Career Center webpage.
- e. Inclusion of at least one Career Center representative in a county board/committee such as the industrial board or economic development council.
- f. Increased Participation in Workforce Employer Outreach Committees (WEOC) – These committees are set up in most counties and have quarterly meetings. They provide a direct link between the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development and the employers in the county.
- g. Increase in GEDs. There are over 1.25 million working Tennesseans who do not have a GED. This hinders the state's ability to claim we have an educated workforce that can meet the demands of the jobs of the 21st Century. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development oversees and administers the Adult Education (AE) program for the state.
- h. Increase in Drug Free Workplace Participation – The drug free workplace program is administered through our Workers' Compensation Division and provides a discount on workers' compensation premiums and other features for participation in the program. Currently there are approximately 5,000 employers statewide participating.

- ✓ A **progress report of the committee** **must** be presented to the local legislative body a **minimum of two (2) times per year** to be included in the minutes of the local legislative body. Report format provided by the REDS.

- ✓ **Reports will be due by** _____ **and** _____.